



The 2023 Celtic Simultaneous Pairs

Monday 4th December

We are so pleased to welcome you once again to the Celtic Simultaneous Pairs, supporting the Celtic Nations. Funds raised will be used to support bridge within your own Bridge Union, whether that is the Scottish, Welsh, Northern Ireland or Irish Bridge Union.

We really hope you enjoyed the event and found the hands fun and challenging. Hopefully the commentators managed to get it right but by now you will be able to judge that for yourself!

We hope you will all take care, stay safe and well and – since we are now in December – we wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year

Anna Gudge,
Simultaneous Pairs Organiser
on behalf of the SBU, WBU, NIBU and IBU

Board 1. Love All. Dealer North.

	♠ J 10 2		
	♥ Q 9 3		
	♦ A Q 8 5 2		
	♣ A Q		
♠ 5		♠ 8 7 4 3	
♥ J 10 7 4		♥ 8 2	
♦ 10 9 7 6		♦ 4	
♣ K J 10 3		♣ 9 8 7 5 4 2	
	♠ A K Q 9 6		
	♥ A K 6 5		
	♦ K J 3		
	♣ 6		

A grand start to the evening – North-South have fourteen tricks on top in 7NT. Reaching that contract could prove a little awkward, though. If North opens a strong no trump, the diamond fit may not be apparent and South might settle for seven spades once North supports that suit. Weak no-trumpers should have an easier time, for North's opening one diamond will tell South that his ♦KJx are worth their weight in gold – or, more importantly, in match points.

Board 2. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

	♠ 8		
	♥ K 9 8 3 2		
	♦ Q J 6 5 2		
	♣ 9 8		
♠ K Q 10 6 5 4 2		♠ 9	
♥ A Q 7		♥ 5 4	
♦ 4		♦ A 9 7 3	
♣ J 6		♣ A K 10 7 5 4	
	♠ A J 7 3		
	♥ J 10 6		
	♦ K 10 8		
	♣ Q 3 2		

East has a minimum but entirely normal opening bid of one club, and West is likely to drive to four spades over that. But the cards are lying poorly for declarer, and the result at most tables will be one down. At double dummy, declarer can succeed against any lead but a club – the winning line, though, is so obscure that anyone who finds it deserves a Boy Scout badge. A plus score for East-West will be well above average on this awkward deal.

Board 3. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

♠ K 8 7 6 5 3	
♥ 9 3	
♦ K 10 9	
♣ 9 6	
♠ 4 2	♠ A J
♥ K Q 8 6 5 2	♥ A J 7
♦ 2	♦ Q 7 6 5 3
♣ A K J 3	♣ 8 5 2
♠ Q 10 9	
♥ 10 4	
♦ A J 8 4	
♣ Q 10 7 4	

West will open one heart, and some intrepid Norths will overcall one spade or even a weak two spades. That should not prevent East-West bidding to four hearts, but might encourage South to sacrifice in four spades at the vulnerability. If that happens, East-West will have to take the push to five hearts to obtain a decent score, since North will concede at worst 500 in four spades. Bridge, they say, is a bidder's game, and they are right.

Board 4. Game All. Dealer West.

♠ K J 8 4 3 2	
♥ A K 5 4	
♦ 4	
♣ 9 7	
♠ 7	♠ A Q 10
♥ 9 8 7 6	♥ J 2
♦ A J 7 5 2	♦ K 10 8 3
♣ A K J	♣ 10 6 4 2
♠ 9 6 5	
♥ Q 10 3	
♦ Q 9 6	
♣ Q 8 5 3	

West's opening bid of one diamond will be overcalled by North with one spade, and East has a decision. His diamond support is fine for a raise to three diamonds – perhaps using a cue bid of two spades in the modern style. But if he promotes his ♠AQ10 on the bidding, he may make the practical call of 2NT, which West should raise to game. The contract can always be made, perhaps with an overtrick, and that will be a very fine result for East-West.

Board 5. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

♠ J 9 6	
♥ K J 6 2	
♦ A J 5 3	
♣ A J	
♠ A K 8 2	♠ Q 10 7 5
♥ Q	♥ 9 7 5
♦ Q 10 7 6 2	♦ K 9 8
♣ Q 10 3	♣ K 9 7
♠ 4 3	
♥ A 10 8 4 3	
♦ 4	
♣ 8 6 5 4 2	

North-South have the minority of the high-card points, but they can actually make a game – with the favourable club division and the fall of ♥Q, four hearts cannot be defeated. Some may even reach this contract if North opens 1♥, for South will raise to four as an offensive / defensive measure. In theory, East-West do best to save in four spades, two down doubled on optimal defence, but in practice that won't bring them in a whole lot of match points.

Board 6. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

♠ A J	
♥ 10 7	
♦ K Q 9 8 7	
♣ A Q J 7	
♠ K 6 5 3	♠ Q 9
♥ A 8 3 2	♥ K Q 9 5
♦ 5 2	♦ 10 6 4
♣ 10 8 6	♣ 9 5 4 2
♠ 10 8 7 4 2	
♥ J 6 4	
♦ A J 3	
♣ K 3	

For once, the dealer doesn't have an opening bid – the first three players will all defer to North, who will open one diamond. After South responds one spade, North should rebid a simple two clubs, over which South has the values for three diamonds with his minor-suit honours promoted on the bidding. Now North does best to bid a fourth-suit three hearts, and South does best to pretend that ♥J64 is a stopper. It isn't, but 3NT will still make, and will score very well since not everyone will get there.

Board 7. Game All. Dealer South.

♠ K 2	
♥ J 9 6 3	
♦ 9 3	
♣ K 10 9 7 6	
♠ Q 7 5 3	♠ 9 8 4
♥ K Q 4 2	♥ A 10 8
♦ 10 8	♦ K Q J 7 4
♣ J 8 4	♣ A 2
♠ A J 10 6	
♥ 7 5	
♦ A 6 5 2	
♣ Q 5 3	

Opening balanced eleven counts is all the rage in expert circles these days, but vulnerable at pairs is not the best time for such gambits. If South passes like a solid citizen, East will end up in INT more often than not, where the defenders can beat him a couple of tricks if they do everything right. East-West have a plus available in two diamonds, North-South can make two clubs, but plus 100 for North-South will be around average.

Board 8. Love All. Dealer West.

♠ 10 6 4	
♥ K Q 8 3	
♦ 9 8 6 4	
♣ K 7	
♠ A Q 3	♠ 9 7 5
♥ J 2	♥ A 10 9 4
♦ K 10 5	♦ A J 3 2
♣ 10 8 6 3 2	♣ J 9
♠ K J 8 2	
♥ 7 6 5	
♦ Q 7	
♣ A Q 5 4	

Another hand likely to start with three passes. South's weak no trump will begin and end the bidding, and he won't enjoy the play much – in fact, he'll do pretty well to get out of it for two down. If playing a strong no trump, he might open 1♣ and pass his partner out in 1♥ – but that won't exactly be a picnic either. North-South's optimum result is almost certainly to pass the hand out – but no one likes doing that when they have paid perfectly good table money.

Board 9. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

♠ 8 6	
♥ 10	
♦ J 8 4 3 2	
♣ A Q 10 4 3	
♠ J 10 9 2	♠ A K 5 4 3
♥ K Q 3	♥ 8 7 4
♦ 10 7	♦ K Q 9
♣ J 9 6 5	♣ K 8
♠ Q 7	
♥ A J 9 6 5 2	
♦ A 6 5	
♣ 7 2	

East-West belong in a spade part-score here, though some may over-reach to game. If East begins with 1♠ and South overcalls 2♥, West will raise to 2♠ and North may risk a competitive double to show the minor suits. That could encourage East to try an ambitious 4♠, on the grounds that his minor-suit holdings have been promoted, but a heart ruff (or perhaps two) will convince him of the error of his ways.

Board 10. Game All. Dealer East.

♠ K Q 4 3	
♥ A K Q	
♦ 5	
♣ A K 10 8 4	
♠ 9	♠ 10 8 7 6 2
♥ 8 5 4 2	♥ 3
♦ K 10 7 3	♦ A Q 9 6 2
♣ Q 9 6 5	♣ 7 2
♠ A J 5	
♥ J 10 9 7 6	
♦ J 8 4	
♣ J 3	

North's hand is best opened with a simple 1♣, though some may try 2NT to express the point count regardless of the low singleton diamond. After 1♣-1♥-, North rebids 2♠ and South has an awkward call – a simple false preference to 3♣ should see the auction conclude 3♥-3♠-4♥. With the favourable club position, twelve tricks are available if declarer times the play correctly, and 680 should be a fair score for North-South.

Board 11. Love All. Dealer South.

♠ K Q 9 4	
♥ A Q 3	
♦ 7 5	
♣ Q J 9 8	
♠ 8 6 3 2	♠ 7
♥ J 10 7 6 2	♥ 5 4
♦ A 2	♦ K Q J 9 8 4 3
♣ A K	♣ 10 5 4
♠ A J 10 5	
♥ K 9 8	
♦ 10 6	
♣ 7 6 3 2	

It is normal for North to make a takeout double of West's 1♥ opening – the diamond holding is not ideal, but you can't wait around all night for the perfect hand. That ought to lead to a competitive auction in which North-South may bid up to 3♠. East-West can obtain a small plus by passing this out and defending correctly, or a slightly larger plus by competing to four diamonds, which can be made. 130 will be fine for East-West, any plus at all will be very good for North-South.

Board 12. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

♠ 6	
♥ Q 6 4	
♦ A 5 4 2	
♣ K Q 7 5 3	
♠ K 4	♠ Q 10 9 8 7
♥ A 9 8 7 5	♥ J 2
♦ 10 9 8 7 6	♦ K J 3
♣ 4	♣ 10 9 6
♠ A J 5 3 2	
♥ K 10 3	
♦ Q	
♣ A J 8 2	

North has a marginal opening bid of 1♣, and South may think in terms of a slam in clubs. There is only one top loser and the jack of hearts is where it needs to be – but there aren't twelve winners, so South had better contain his ambitions. Five clubs is a comfortable make; 3NT can be beaten if West leads any diamond or if an inspired East leads the king of that suit. 400 will be a pretty good score for North-South, any plus will be fine for East-West.

Board 13. Game All. Dealer North.

♠ 10 5 4 3	
♥ 3	
♦ J 5 4	
♣ K Q 10 9 5	
♠ 8 7	♠ A Q 9 6
♥ 10 8 7 6 5 4	♥ K Q 9
♦ 10 9	♦ A K 8 6 3
♣ J 8 4	♣ 6
♠ K J 2	
♥ A J 2	
♦ Q 7 2	
♣ A 7 3 2	

Not easy to predict the auction here, apart from East's opening bid of one diamond. South has a marginal INT overcall, which may or may not prevent West from introducing his heart suit; North may compete in spades or clubs... I give up. East-West can make nine tricks in hearts (East can make ten unless South leads a low club). North-South can make eight tricks in no trumps, or nine in clubs. Anyone who makes anything will score pretty well for so doing.

Board 14. Love All. Dealer East.

♠ K 7	
♥ Q 7 2	
♦ J 8	
♣ A 10 8 4 3 2	
♠ Q 10 6	♠ A J 9 8 4
♥ A J 10 9 3	♥ K 8 6 4
♦ A 10 4 2	♦ K Q 9
♣ J	♣ 5
♠ 5 3 2	
♥ 5	
♦ 7 6 5 3	
♣ K Q 9 7 6	

East-West can make twelve tricks in spades, hearts and even diamonds – but that will require a good view in the heart suit to pick up North's queen. If North-South are tempted to save over a major-suit game in five clubs, they will find the price more than they were willing to pay. 450 for East-West will be the most common result – any pair who collects better than this can be pleased with their efforts, or grateful for the kindness of their opponents.

Board 15. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

♠ A Q	
♥ 10 4 3	
♦ 9 6 5 4 2	
♣ A Q 9	
♠ J 8 6	♠ 10 7 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 9	♥ A 5
♦ A K J	♦ Q 8 7 3
♣ 8 7 6 5	♣ 4
♠ K 9	
♥ Q 8 7 6 2	
♦ 10	
♣ K J 10 3 2	

East-West are likely to buy the hand in some number of spades – perhaps two, if West’s weak no trump is removed to 2♠ by East. If East transfers with 2♥, an aggressive South can find a way into the auction by doubling to show hearts, then competing with 3♣ if 2♠ is passed round. The defenders can arrange a minor-suit ruff in order to hold spades to nine tricks, or hearts to eight, but 140 should be around average for East-West – anything better will score well.

Board 16. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

♠ 5 2	
♥ J 10 6 3	
♦ 9 4	
♣ 9 8 7 6 4	
♠ K Q 8 6 4	♠ A 10
♥ Q 2	♥ A 9 7
♦ K 10 5 2	♦ Q J 7 3
♣ 5 3	♣ K Q J 10
♠ J 9 7 3	
♥ K 8 5 4	
♦ A 8 6	
♣ A 2	

East is likely to end up as declarer in 3NT here, and the question is only “can he make an overtrick”? with an awkward opening lead, South does best to choose a heart – he will probably find this, since West will have bid spades at some point. Provided that South continues hearts each time he wins a minor-suit ace, his side will collect the four tricks that are their due. Would East-West do better in spades? Only at double dummy – ten tricks can be made, but won’t be.

Board 17. Love All. Dealer North.

♠ A 9 7 6	
♥ 8 5 3	
♦ A K 7 3	
♣ K 6	
♠ K J 10 5 4	♠ 3
♥ 6 4	♥ K Q 10 9 7
♦ J 9	♦ Q 10 8 6
♣ A J 7 2	♣ Q 9 8
♠ Q 8 2	
♥ A J 2	
♦ 5 4 2	
♣ 10 5 4 3	

North’s weak no trump may be overcalled by East with 2♥, or some headache remedy. At pairs, it’s not foolish for South to make a penalty double of a 2♥ contract – quite a lot of the time, it will be important to collect 100 against 2♥ rather than 90 in INT. In fact, INT won’t make, so East’s intervention – or West’s, if INT comes round to him – will convert a plus into a minus. If North, playing a strong no trump or valuing his hand as one anyway, opens 1♦, the outcome is far from clear. Any plus will be good for the side that gets one.

Board 18. N/S Vul. Dealer East.

♠ A K 10 8 7	
♥ Q 5 2	
♦ J 9 5	
♣ 10 9	
♠ Q 5 2	♠ 9 6 4 3
♥ A J 8	♥ K 7 3
♦ 6 4	♦ A Q 8
♣ A Q 8 7 4	♣ J 6 2
♠ J	
♥ 10 9 6 4	
♦ K 10 7 3 2	
♣ K 5 3	

West’s turn to open a weak no trump, and North’s to contemplate an overcall. The cards lie so horribly for North-South that East-West can make nine tricks in no trumps – ten if North makes a normal enough low spade lead. Minus 150 or 180 might not be too bad, though, for those Norths who do risk an overcall will wish they hadn’t. 2♠ is two down at least, and -200 will be the terrible result that it always is in a pairs contest.

Board 19. E/W Vul. Dealer South.

♠ Q 6	
♥ 5 4	
♦ 10 9 7 3 2	
♣ K 10 6 5	
♠ 8	♠ K 10 5 4 3
♥ K Q 10 7 3 2	♥ A J 8 6
♦ K 6 5 4	♦ J
♣ 7 4	♣ A J 3
♠ A J 9 7 2	
♥ 9	
♦ A Q 8	
♣ Q 9 8 2	

South's opening bid of 1♠ will set a problem for West – should he produce a vulnerable 2♥ overcall? If he does, his side will reach a comfortable 4♥. If not, much will depend on North's action – if he passes, so will East, and South won't care much whether he makes 1♠ or not. If North responds INT and South bids 2♣, West may now feel he can enter the auction, leading once again to game in hearts. 620 will be common for East-West, but by no means universal.

Board 20. Game All. Dealer West.

♠ J 6	
♥ K 10 5 4 3	
♦ K Q J 10 7 2	
♣ —	
♠ A 5	♠ 10 4 3 2
♥ 8 2	♥ A J 9
♦ 6 4	♦ A 9
♣ A K 10 8 6 5 3	♣ Q 9 4 2
♠ K Q 9 8 7	
♥ Q 7 6	
♦ 8 5 3	
♣ J 7	

The par result on this deal is for North-South to sacrifice in five of a red suit over East-West's contract of 4NT. The bidding may start with 1♣ by West and 2NT for the lower two suits by North. East doesn't have a clear action over that – he could cue-bid a red suit to show a club raise, or try 3NT and hope. In the latter case, it won't be obvious to North-South that they should do any more, so some East-West pairs will come away with 630 and a lot of match points, while -500 won't be at all bad for North-South.

Board 21. N/S Vul. Dealer North.

♠ Q 10 7 4 3 2	
♥ 5	
♦ J 6 3	
♣ A 9 4	
♠ A K 5	♠ 9 6
♥ A 9	♥ K J 10 8 6 3 2
♦ Q 9 2	♦ A
♣ K J 10 6 3	♣ Q 7 5
♠ J 8	
♥ Q 7 4	
♦ K 10 8 7 5 4	
♣ 8 2	

If North opens a weak 2♠ he may regret it, for when his opponents arrive in a heart contract, the opening bid might give declarer the clue he needs to pick up South's ♥Q and emerge with twelve tricks. If North passes as dealer, the likely outcome is that East-West will score 450 in the heart game. Some will try a slam – perhaps six clubs is a better contract than six hearts, but making either will score very well. So will going down – but for the opponents.

Board 22. E/W Vul. Dealer East.

♠ Q 6 2	
♥ 9 7 4	
♦ Q 5 3	
♣ K 10 8 2	
♠ K 10 9 8 5	♠ J 4
♥ A Q 8	♥ J 10
♦ 4	♦ A K 7 6 2
♣ Q J 9 4	♣ A 7 6 5
♠ A 7 3	
♥ K 6 5 3 2	
♦ J 10 9 8	
♣ 3	

Some will open a weak no trump on the East cards, some a more traditional 1♦. West, on the principle that an opening bid facing an opening bid makes a game will bid one eventually. Even with the unfriendly club layout, declarer can still come to nine tricks in 3NT – a lot of matchpoints will ride on whether or not he can come to a tenth, especially since the alternative contract of 4♠ is a make on careful play.

Board 23. Game All. Dealer South.

♠ 10 9 5	
♥ A 9 8 2	
♦ K 6 3	
♣ A K 5	
♠ A J 2	♠ K 8 7
♥ J	♥ Q 7 6 3
♦ A Q J 7 5	♦ 10 8 2
♣ 10 9 3 2	♣ J 7 6
♠ Q 6 4 3	
♥ K 10 5 4	
♦ 9 4	
♣ Q 8 4	

A part-score affair on which North will do best to double the opening bid of 1♦, for that might allow his side to compete successfully to 2♥, which can be made, or drive his opponents to 3♦, which cannot. If the bidding begins 1♥-Double-1♥, what should South do? The modern answer is to double, essentially for penalty and announcing that he would have been happy to respond at least 1♥ himself to the takeout double. Part-scores such as this are where pairs games are won and lost.

Board 24. Love All. Dealer West.

♠ K 10 5	
♥ A K 2	
♦ Q 6 5 3	
♣ Q 10 5	
♠ 8 7 6 3 2	♠ Q J
♥ J 6 3	♥ 10 9 7 4
♦ J 2	♦ K 9 8
♣ A 4 2	♣ J 8 6 3
♠ A 9 4	
♥ Q 8 5	
♦ A 10 7 4	
♣ K 9 7	

North-South will bid INT-3NT at every table where the weak no trump is in use, and reach the same contract more slowly where it is not. It's up to declarer to guess well in the play – eleven tricks can always be made, but some will make only ten. They will feel hard done by if they achieved this by playing diamonds in percentage fashion – low to the queen, then low to the ten – but as so often in bridge, there are no marks for style or technical merit. Only results.

Board 25. E/W Vul. Dealer North.

♠ 8 7	
♥ 5	
♦ K J 10 7 6	
♣ A 10 7 5 2	
♠ Q 9 4 3	♠ J 6 5 2
♥ 10 7 6 3 2	♥ Q 9 8 4
♦ 8 4 3	♦ A 5
♣ 4	♣ J 8 3
♠ A K 10	
♥ A K J	
♦ Q 9 2	
♣ K Q 9 6	

A bidding test for North-South here – South's excellent fit for North's suits and his top cards in the majors mean that 6NT is a cast-iron contract. But showing a minor two-suiter is not easy in response to a 2NT opening without either a lot of gadgets or none at all. The latter approach will lead to 2NT-3♦-3NT-4♣-some slam or other. If you want to know about the former approach, visit your local gadget shop. It's no use looking at me.

Board 26. Game All. Dealer East.

♠ A 6	
♥ J 7 5 2	
♦ A J 9 8 3	
♣ 10 2	
♠ 9 7	♠ K Q J 5 3
♥ K Q 9	♥ A 10 8 6
♦ K 7 6	♦ 10 5 4
♣ A 9 7 5 3	♣ K
♠ 10 8 4 2	
♥ 4 3	
♦ Q 2	
♣ Q J 8 6 4	

East-West have plenty of points but no game – 4♠, 4♥ and 3NT can all be beaten by a diamond lead. Whether they bid scientifically – 1♠-2♣-2♥-3♦ (in which case North will double and South will lead a diamond against a major-suit game) or agriculturally – 1♠-3NT (in which case North will lead a diamond anyway), they are doomed to fail. I expect plenty of -100s for East-West on this deal, and not much of anything else.

Board 27. Love All. Dealer South.

♠ K 8	
♥ J 9 5 2	
♦ A J 6	
♣ K Q 6 3	
♠ 9 7 5	♠ A Q 6 2
♥ Q 8 3	♥ A 10 7
♦ K 9 8 7 3	♦ 10 5 2
♣ 9 5	♣ 8 7 2
♠ J 10 4 3	
♥ K 6 4	
♦ Q 4	
♣ A J 10 4	

South might upgrade his hand to a weak no trump (“all those tens, partner”) or wait for North to open one, but in either case 3NT will be the final contract. It doesn’t make a lot of difference who plays the hand or (within reason) what the opening lead may be – there are nine tricks, and finding a tenth ought to prove impossible. Some will manage it, and some will muddle things and go down, but this looks like the flattest board of the evening.

Board 28. N/S Vul. Dealer West.

♠ Q 10 2	
♥ A K 8 4 2	
♦ 7	
♣ A K J 3	
♠ A J 9 6 5	♠ K 8
♥ Q 3	♥ J 6
♦ K 10 6 5 4	♦ Q 9 2
♣ 6	♣ Q 10 9 7 5
2	
♠ 7 4 3	
♥ 10 9 7 5	
♦ A J 8 3	
♣ 8 4	

West does well to introduce his spades at some point, in order to enable East to find the lead of ♠K and another, holding the routine contract of 4♥ to ten tricks. But these days, most Wests will open the bidding, or at any rate contest with 2♠ after 1♥ is raised to two by South. In some ways, there is less need to open light when you have spades – chances are, you will get a chance to better describe your hand by acting later. But “open the bidding with any excuse” is a simpler and more attractive philosophy than that.

Board 29. Game All. Dealer North.

♠ J 7	
♥ A J 7 4	
♦ 10 5 4	
♣ 10 5 4 3	
♠ A 9	♠ Q 10 8 6 4 2
♥ 8 3	♥ 9 6 2
♦ A Q 9 7 2	♦ J 8 6 3
♣ Q 9 8 2	♣ —
♠ K 5 3	
♥ K Q 10 5	
♦ K	
♣ A K J 7 6	

North-South may well reach 4♥ here, even if a super-intrepid East does open a weak 2♠ on an awful hand. But reaching a respectable game is one thing – making it, on this lie of cards, is quite another. Since East can obtain a couple of club ruffs, and since if declarer draws trumps he will not have enough tricks, the contract is doomed to fail. If you made it – well, you’ve probably got the event sewn up by now.

Board 30. Love All. Dealer East.

♠ 4	
♥ A Q 9 8 5 3	
♦ 5 2	
♣ K 9 8 4	
♠ 5 3 2	♠ Q 10 9 7
♥ J 10 2	♥ K 4
♦ 10 9 3	♦ A J 8 6
♣ A J 10 7	♣ 6 3 2
♠ A K J 8 6	
♥ 7 6	
♦ K Q 7 4	
♣ Q 5	

An awkward combination for North-South, who are likely to begin 1♠-2♥-2♠-3♥. South may well raise this ostensibly constructive sequence to game, but North will have to play like a man inspired to land his contract. It will help if he knows the percentage play in hearts, which is to begin by running the seven. Even then, it is an uphill struggle, but if you made this one as well as board 29, you can wait with confidence for the final results.

Board 31. N/S Vul. Dealer South.

<p>♠ 3 ♥ A J 9 8 6 ♦ K 10 8 6 2 ♣ 9 3</p> <p>♠ A Q 8 6 4 ♥ K 10 5 3 2 ♦ 4 ♣ 6 4</p>	<p>♠ K 7 ♥ Q 7 ♦ 9 5 3 ♣ A Q J 8 7 5</p> <p>♠ J 10 9 5 2 ♥ 4 ♦ A Q J 7 ♣ K 10 2</p>
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If South tries a light opening bid of 1♠ here, much may depend on whether North chooses a response of 2♥ (leading to an unhappy 2♠) or 1NT (leading to a rather happier outcome in a diamond contract). If South passes and West tries a light opening bid of 1♠, who knows where he will end up – but wherever it is, he won't make it. The moral? There is less need to open light when you have spades. Did I mention that before?

Board 32. E/W Vul. Dealer West.

<p>♠ 6 ♥ J 10 8 7 3 ♦ K Q J 9 4 ♣ 6 5</p> <p>♠ K J 10 8 ♥ 6 5 ♦ A 5 2 ♣ 9 8 7 2</p>	<p>♠ Q 7 5 4 ♥ K ♦ 8 7 6 3 ♣ K J 4 3</p> <p>♠ A 9 3 2 ♥ A Q 9 4 2 ♦ 10 ♣ A Q 10</p>
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All roads are likely to lead to a final contract of 4♥ by North-South here, and with the club and heart finesses working, all roads are likely to lead to twelve tricks. Six hearts by South, with the club position protected from the opening lead, is actually only fractionally worse than a finesse. Don't all finesses lose in simultaneous pairs events? About half of them, in fact – the hands are dealt by a computer, and no human edits them thereafter. The boy who said "or writes the commentary" will stay behind and put the bidding boxes away.